

Message Text

SECRET

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INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 R

DRAFTED BY NEA:ALATHERTON, JR./HLK
APPROVED BY NEA - ALFRED L. ATHERTON, JR.
S/S - FVORTIZ
S - MR. BARBIAN (BY PHONE)

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O 200107Z APR 76 ZFF4
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO USDEL SECRETARY IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 094984 TOSEC 100078

NODIS
FOR SECRETARY FROM ATHERTON

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, EG, US, LE, SY

SUBJECT: ACTION MEMORANDUM: RESPONSE TO FAHMY'S COMMENTS
ON YOUR LAST MESSAGE (S/S 7608229)

REF: CAIRO 5273

1. YOU WILL HAVE SEEN EILTS' REPORT IN REFTEL OF HIS
MEETING WITH FAHMY TO CONVEY THE MESSAGE YOU APPROVED
SUNDAY. IT IS APPARENT THAT FAHMY REMAINS UNCONVINCED
THAT OUR POSITION TOWARD LEBANON CRISIS IS AS WE HAVE
DESCRIBED IT TO HIM, AND POSSIBLY NOTHING SHORT OF A
PUBLIC DENUNCIATION OF SYRIAN EFFORTS IN LEBANON WILL
CHANGE HIS MIND. WE ARE PUTTING TOGETHER THE FULLER
ANALYSIS YOU PROMISED TO FAHMY AND SADAT WITH A VIEW TO
SENDING IT TO YOU TUESDAY IN CALIFORNIA. YOU MAY WISH
TO DISCUSS THIS AT OUR LEBANON MEETING WEDNESDAY MORNING;

2. MEANWHILE, YOU MAY WISH TO CONSIDER A BRIEF FURTHER
INSTRUCTION TO EILTS TO DEAL WITH SOME OF THE GROSSER MIS-
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CONCEPTIONS THAT FAHMY EXPRESSED TO HIM. FOLLOWING IS A

SUGGESTED MESSAGE FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION.

3. BEGIN TEXT:

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IMMEDIATE CAIRO

NODIS

FOR AMBASSADOR FROM SECRETARY

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, EG, US, SY, LE

SUBJECT: FAHMY'S REACTION TO SECRETARY'S LAST MESSAGE
ON LEBANON

REF: CAIRO 5273

PLEASE INFORM FAHMY THAT I HAVE READ CAREFULLY THE
REPORT OF YOUR MONDAY CONVERSATION WITH HIM WHEN YOU
DELIVERED MY LATEST MESSAGE ON LEBANESE SITUATION. I
WILL PLAN TO SEND OUR FULLER ANALYSIS TO YOU FOR SADAT
AND FAHMY ON WEDNESDAY FOLLOWING MY RETURN TO WASHINGTON
FROM CALIFORNIA. MEANWHILE, HOWEVER, I WOULD LIKE TO
CONVEY A FEW PRELIMINARY REACTIONS TO HIS COMMENTS
TO YOU, SINCE I AM CONCERNED THAT WE DO NOT SEEM TO BE
GETTING THROUGH TO HIM.

ON THE QUESTION OF WHETHER OR NOT WE HAD GIVEN SYRIA
A "GREEN LIGHT" ON LIMITED SYRIAN INTERVENTION, THE
SEQUENCE OF EVENTS WAS THE REVERSE OF THE WAY FAHMY
DESCRIBES THEM. WHEN THE SYRIANS APPROACHED US THROUGH
THE FRENCH AND KING HUSSEIN ABOUT THEIR DESIRE TO INTER-
VENE MILITARILY, IT WAS CLEAR THAT THEY ALREADY HAD
FORCES IN LEBANON UNDER THEIR CONTROL WHICH WERE ABOUT
AT THE LIMIT OF WHAT WE JUDGED WOULD TRIGGER AN ISRAELI
REACTION. AS WE INFORMED FAHMY AT THE TIME
(STATE 74949), WE INFORMED THE SYRIANS BOTH DIRECTLY

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AND THROUGH THE FRENCH THAT IN OUR VIEW ISRAEL WOULD
MOVE IF THE TOTAL NUMBER OF SYRIAN FORCES IN LEBANON,
INCLUDING THOSE ALREADY THERE AND EVEN THOUGH MIXED WITH
LOCAL OR OTHER (E.G., PALESTINIAN) NON-SYRIAN FORCES,
EXCEEDED A BRIGADE IN SIZE OR IF THEY WERE TO EMPLOY
HEAVY WEAPONS. SINCE WE ESTIMATED THAT THE SYRIANS
HAD ALREADY NEARLY A BRIGADE IN LEBANON, THIS WAS CLEARLY
MEANT TO MAKE CLEAR THAT FURTHER MOVEMENT WOULD RUN HIGH

RISK OF ISRAELI REACTION. IT WAS DESIGNED TO BE A "RED LIGHT" NOT A GREEN LIGHT FOR FURTHER SYRIAN MILITARY

INTERVENTION.

SO FAR AS OUR "ARRANGING" LIMITS OF SYRIAN INTERVENTION WITH ISRAELIS IS CONCERNED, YOU SHOULD TELL FAHMY THAT ASAD HAS NOT RECEIVED MURPHY SINCE THEIR MEETING IMMEDIATELY AFTER LATTER'S RETURN TO DAMASCUS. OUR LATEST COMMUNICATION FROM ASAD, PASSED TO MURPHY DIRECTLY, WAS TO REJECT AS AN "ULTIMATUM" THE WARNING WE CONVEYED AT THE END OF LAST WEEK CONCERNING THE SYRIAN FORCES SENT INTO LEBANON. THIS WARNING WAS NOT BASED ON ANY PRECISE DEFINITION OF THEIR LIMITS GIVEN US BY THE ISRAELIS, SINCE THEY HAVE NOT REPEAT NOT DONE SO, BUT ON OUR BEST JUDGMENT OF WHAT THE REALITIES ARE.

THE FACT THAT THE ISRAELIS HAVE NOT REACTED TO SYRIAN INTERVENTION TO DATE, WHEN THEY HAVE REACTED TO MUCH LESS IN THE PAST, IS LARGEMLY THE RESULT OF OUR HAVING PERSUADED THEM THAT THEIR INTERVENTION NOW WOULD ONLY MAKE MATTERS WORSE AND INCREASE, RATHER THAN DIMINISH, THE RISK OF RENEWED AREA HOSTILITIES.

WITH RESPECT TO FAHMY'S DESIRE FOR A FULLER REPORT ON OUR TALKS WITH HUSSEIN AND ZAID RIFAI, WE HAVE ALREADY CONVEYED THE MAIN SUBSTANCE WITH REGARD TO LEBANON (STATE 77803) WHICH WAS THE DOMINANT SUBJECT FOR DISCUSSION DURING HUSSEIN'S VISIT, AND WITH REGARD TO OUR DISCUSSIONS WITH HUSSEIN OF THE NON-BELLIGERENCY CONCEPT (STATE 88411). HUSSEIN AND RIFAI MADE IT CLEAR THAT THEY CONSIDER THEMSELVES BOUND BY THE RABAT SUMMIT DECISION AND THAT, IN THE ABSENCE OF AN ISRAELI OFFER

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OF TOTAL WITHDRAWAL, THEY WERE NOT INTERESTED IN TAKING ANY NEGOTIATING INITIATIVES. WITH RESPECT TO UNDOF RENEWAL, IT WAS HUSSEIN'S VIEW THAT ASAD WILL NOT REPEAT NOT AGREE TO A RENEWAL IN MAY UNLESS HE CAN GET A SUBSTANTIAL POLITICAL PRICE -- E.G., LINKAGE TO A RESOLUTION OF THE KIND WE VETOED IN JANUARY. WE MADE CLEAR TO HUSSEIN THAT THIS WAS OUT OF THE QUESTION BUT, AS INDICATED IN MY LAST MESSAGE, WE HAVE HAD NO DISCUSSIONS DIRECTLY WITH ASAD ABOUT UNDOF RENEWAL QUESTION.

FINALLY, PLEASE TELL FAHMY I WILL BE IN FURTHER TOUCH WITH HIM SHORTLY AND MEANWHILE WOULD APPRECIATE ANY VIEWS PRESIDENT SADAT AND HE MAY WANT TO CONVEY IN RESPONSE TO THE QUESTIONS I POSED IN MY LAST MESSAGE.

END TEXT.

APPROVE DISAPPROVE

4. DRAFTED:NEA:ALATHERTON, JR.

APPROVED:NEA:ALATHERTON, JR.

CLEARED:S/S

ROBINSON

SECRET

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: TOSEC, INSTRUCTIONS, INTERVENTION, POLITICAL SETTLEMENT, BRIEFING MATERIALS, DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS, FOREIGN POLICY POSITION, POLITICAL SITUATION, CAT-C
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 20 APR 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: greeneet
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976STATE094984
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: ALATHERTON, JR./HLK
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: P840099-0087
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760443/aaaabjyo.tel
Line Count: 179
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN NODS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: NODIS
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: NODIS
Reference: 76 CAIRO 5273
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: greeneet
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 08 JUN 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <08 JUN 2004 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <12 OCT 2004 by greeneet>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: ACTION MEMORANDUM: RESPONSE TO FAHMY'S COMMENTS ON YOUR LAST MESSAGE (S/S 7608229)
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Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006